

UFO AFRINEWS



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Editor : Cynthia Hind
Ass. Editor : Maria Sullivan

Correspondents :

NAMIBIA Roland Roeis

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town Pamela Puxley Tel. 881722
Prier Wintle Tel. 478701

Durban Rubin Rose Tel. 812737

Johannesburg Graham & Karen
Longstaff
Kenny McKinnon Tel. 318-1028

Port Elizabeth David Powell

ZIMBABWE

Bulawayo Victor Forward Tel. 73417
Nathan Middledorf
Elias Mutwira

Gweru Trevor Thornton Tel. 7471

Mutare Alexander Leon

All correspondence to : GEMINI, P O Box MP 49
Mount Pleasant

HARARE ZIMBABWE

PLEASE NOTE : Dates in this Newsletter are given as
the day, the month and the year, e.g. 07:05:92

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EDITORIALBELIEF PATTERNS

Cynthia Hind

However gullible or sceptical one may be, each individual has a periphery of his/her beliefs and I think particularly in something as controversial as Ufology, one has to set one's standards. But there is no doubt in my mind, the person who does not accept blindly; the person who questions and checks the witnesses' stories meticulously and individually; that is the person for whom I have the greatest respect and who, generally speaking, has my complete trust.

Most people have the maxim that if they saw a UFO, they would believe in them. Bully for them! I have been a serious investigator since about 1975 (17 years ago) and certainly an interested observer for several years before that, and I have NEVER seen a UFO!

True, I once followed a turning light - about 300 metres above the ground - for some 20 miles down the Lomaquindi Road in Harare with Leslie and Maria Sullivan. It was during the 1975 flap, about 9 p.m. on a chilly winter's night, with petrol rationing in force.

The 'orange light' in the sky had been the subject of some hilarity in the local newspapers and had been variously identified as a partial eclipse of Mars, a 'Mazoe orange' and of course, a UFO. We observed it through powerful binoculars but could see no more than a bright light with some sort of attachment, slowly revolving to a dark side. Eventually, worried about the shortage of petrol, I would go no further.

Once home, with a hot cup of coffee to warm our chilled bodies, I checked with the newspapers, the Met office and the airports. Charles Prince Airport came up with a possible solution: 'Crop pilots are busy spraying the quelea birds and they only work at night.' It could easily have been a marking flare for them.

Later I discovered that this was not a feasible solution but by then it was too late to try and pinpoint the light.

And then, speaking recently to a group of young businessmen, one confessed that during the 1975 flap he had been one of a group of schoolboys who had 'pulled my leg' with a balloon bearing a light. To me theirs was the most plausible explanation! Seventeen years ago, it might have been important, a 'yea' or 'nay' to my belief system. Now, it no longer matters because I know something is going on that we are not being told about; something we don't understand, and that SOME governments are at pains to keep - whatever it is - secret.

Well, surely the big question is WHY? If UFOs are the hardware of some technologically advanced nation/s, one can understand that those nations have no wish for the general public to know their most intimate secrets, especially as some laser weapons have become so advanced that they could wipe out the world if so wished. On the other hand, if the public knew that such craft existed, that could only be advantageous to those concerned. What greater deterrent than knowing your opponents have access to greater technology than yours? And after all, aren't all Earth people involved in the BIG POWER GAME?

So, if my psychology works normally, one can only assume that these 'unknowns' are from SOMEWHERE ELSE. And the key word here, without a doubt, is WHERE?

Could they come from other constellations, other suns (whose planets are unknown to us) such as the Pleiades which lies in the Constellation TAURUS with its seven visible sisters and many more when seen with binoculars; in fact, there are 400-plus stars in this area. (Billy Meier, the Swiss farmer and contactee, says his 'aliens' are from there.)

Then, in the Constellation CENTAURUS, there are Alpha Centauri - a binary/twin sun - and Proxima Centauri, both about four light years away from us. (This is where Elizabeth Klarer's lover, Akon, is alleged to live.)

Sirius - 8 light years from us - in CANIS MAJOR (a very bright star) has a twin quite close by. Sirius is known as the Dog Star and the fainter star, the Pup (the Dogon people from Mali in North-West Africa worship this 'dark' star) is not visible from Earth without a telescope and was first discovered by us in 1862.

Interestingly enough, according to archaeologist Robert Temple, the Dogon have been devotees of this 'dark' star for at least 450 years, each 50 year cycle marked by the carving of a huge head which is then placed in a cave. In one cave seen by Temple there were nine heads. The Dogon are also aware of the Pup's rotation and the ellipse it travels.

If these 'aliens' are really from such stars, how can one explain their technological absurdities and ineptitudes, and certainly their misleading statements? If they are trying to 'con' us, then to what purpose? They are thousands of years - John Lear says one billion! - ahead of us, so why the hassle to test our tissues, genes and blood when all this should have been quite clear to them aeons ago. Surely a brief scan with one of their highly advanced machines would give them all they need or want to know? And if perhaps they failed in their first test, a second one would be acceptable, but for heaven's sakes, this taking of samples has been going on since the days of Betty and Barney Hill in 1962!!

For some time and since a brief conversation with the late Dr Allen Hynek, I have believed that these 'beings' (or whatever) could come from another Time Dimension. Perhaps living here on Earth, but incredibly far ahead of our Time. So that when the abductees have a brief glimpse of them, they have inadvertently travelled into the Future, as perhaps those who have a glimpse of déjà vu might be travelling into the Past. This would certainly account for the feeling of altered consciousness that so many witnesses report, e.g. JS of Cape Town¹, the Groendal Reserve boys², the abduction of Caroline of Zimbabwe³ and so on.

But whatever it is, BELIEVE I do -- in the existence of something quite inexplicable in our terms of reference. Too many witnesses are sane, non-publicity seeking, not money-making, normal adults. When I told Henry⁴ that I would pay him half the fee from an article concerning him sold to a USA magazine, he refused. "I'm not interested", he said.

And recently, two South African women abductees who are in the million-dollar class, said, "We just want to find out if it's real."

I, like many investigators, speculate endlessly. And I have a feeling that some time in the not too distant future, someone will come up with the answers.

And then let's see where most people's belief systems lie!

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- 1) UFO AFRINEWS numbers 1 and 2
 - 2) UFOS-AFRICAN ENCOUNTERS, pp 138-152, 153
 - 3) UFO AFRINEWS No. 1
 - 4) UFO AFRINEWS numbers 2 and 3

THE GULLIBLE UFOLOGIST

I met a man on my way to Town
His eyes were slanted, his skin was brown,
His nose was small, his ears extended,
His clothes were poor, dull colours blended.
His body short, but his legs were long,
His voice was squeaky like a mouse's song...
His hands were strong, like iron bars.
I'm almost sure he came from Mars.

STRANGE SHAPES

Report from Stuart Marongwe, Kwekwe (aged 19)
Case 41. Zimbabwe

'One evening when my eldest brother saw me reading a UFO book, he said, 'I saw one of those things.' Now my brother is the last person I would expect to know about UFOs or even what the abbreviation stands for. Well, I immediately asked him how it happened. He said it had occurred in Njelele where he was a temporary teacher at that time. He is not quite sure whether it was in 1985 or 1986. It happened around 4 o'clock in the morning when he and his colleagues were out for a quick bath.¹ He said they saw a long white cloud moving from west to east and he added that it was bright white and moved silently but fast.

I asked him whether it might not have been a plane emitting a jet stream. But he quickly dismissed the idea on the basis that it was close and it looked huge and had a definite long shape. There were no features that resembled a plane, either; 'besides', he said, 'one could easily get the feeling that it was something from beyond.'

Stuart goes on to tell us that he too had an experience when he was about 3 years old - in 1976. He was at home with his mother and perhaps some of the villagers, whom they live with in the village of Bapota in Gokwe Communal Lands, may have witnessed this strange event too.

Stuart says: 'One evening my mother and I were at the fireplace where she usually does her open air cooking. We lived together because my brothers and my sister were in boarding school in town.'²

I don't know whether it was over a period of 2 or 3 days. We watched a group of stars bunch up together and form a cluster and then break up, with a chattering noise and then repeat the process over and over again. The next evening they appeared again and repeated their behaviour but this time they made no noise! As the evening progressed they stopped this behaviour.

Ever since then I would like to look up at the night sky at the Pleiades cluster and think they were the same stars that made the chattering noise.

I studied astronomy extensively and became aware that stars are light years away, that they do not make chattering noises and that they do not make organized movements. This led me to believe that whatever happened took place within the Earth's atmosphere. Today I am still puzzled as to what those playful specks of light could have been.

I recall a couple of years back when my mother saw me with a book on the Universe, trying to figure out the constellations while referring to the book. She knew I was studying the stars and asked me what the stars that bunch and scatter, were called. She also added that they no longer have this strange behaviour.

At least I know that I was not alone when I observed this unusual phenomenon.'

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1. Stuart says his brother bathed in the early hours so he and his colleagues could catch an early bus to work.

2. Some cooking is done indoors and some outside, bearing in mind that there was no electricity at the time.

CRASHED UFO IN BOTSWANA?

'South African Intelligence do not have the facilities or the knowledge to pursue this matter alone.

According to the base commander, it is the third space craft they have retrieved in the past ten years, over the South African Continent.'

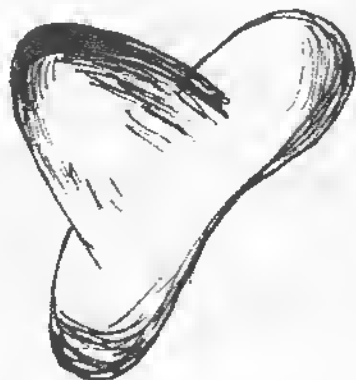
-- James van Greunen, as quoted by Tony Dodd.

Report from Audrey Howell of South Africa. Case 42

Mrs Audrey Howell, of Midrand, Transvaal, saw an unusual object in the sky over her home. Her report follows:-

'In about late July or early August of 1991, over a week-end, my husband and I noticed a rather unusual object in the sky above our property. We live in Glenferness which is in the Midrand area of the Transvaal.

We couldn't decide whether it was a plastic bag or a balloon being blown in the wind, and it was travelling roughly north to south. We decided to look at it through our binoculars, and were surprised to see that it had a regular shape which didn't change at all, but that it seemed to be rotating randomly. The shape was roughly like this:



It was rather like a three-cornered pyramid with a fourth rounded corner on the top; or rather, what would have been the top if it hadn't been travelling in a horizontal position. There were no clear-cut corners; they all appeared to be well-rounded.

It took another ten, maybe twelve minutes, to fly over, only there were no other markings or lights on it that we could see, so we decided that it was either a piece of plastic - but it didn't flop or change shape - or a balloon -- but they tend to be a different shape, don't they? Or else it was a hoax.

We forgot about it until I bought and read THE UFO REPORT 1992, edited by Timothy Good, and in it I read about the roughly triangular shapes that were seen towards the middle of April, 1991 in England! I wondered if there was a connection and if so, whether anyone else had seen anything like it in Africa at that time?

I don't feel that I 'have to see a UFO' but wondered if anyone who has a greater knowledge and perhaps experience of those sorts of things would be able to pass an opinion?

The height at which this was travelling was difficult to estimate, but I remarked to my husband at the time that it looked like a nose cone of a space vehicle which was somewhat out of control.'

Barry Greenwood, Editor, JUST CAUSE
(Nº 31, March 1991)

'Present-day UFO research MUST change the way business is conducted from within to a more basic, less sensational approach. NASA's credibility problems are minor compared to Ufology's... We will not allow our work to be wasted, drowned in science fiction presented as fact.'

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THE SCEPTIC

You never believe that spacecraft exist,
I try to persuade you but you always resist.
You don't listen to reason,
You're convinced of my treason,
Yet in negating the facts, you always persist.

LITS - Unexplained Lights in the Sky

Interview with Nigel Espi and his family, by Pamela Puxley, Cape Town, South Africa. Case N° 38

This incident occurred on 14th May, 1990 between 04:30 and 05:00 in the morning.

Nigel was asleep in bed at his home in Noordhoek, Cape, when he suddenly woke up at about 04:30 and looked out of the window. He saw what at first appeared to be a falling star, but then it seemed to slow down and eventually it stopped. Then it started moving towards him. It didn't come in a straight line, but it came quite close and he was able to see the outline of a shape. He ran to call his mother but by the time she arrived, it had already gone back a bit. She thought it was a star or a planet, but then suddenly it retreated and became just a pinhead. She thought at first that it might be an aircraft or an experimental plane and as her husband was familiar with planes, she went to call him. However, when he saw it, he could not identify it either.

Nigel's sister and his grandmother were also woken up. While they all watched, the object went behind the neighbour's house and then zig-zagged far out over the sea, towards the horizon. Nigel was able to see that it flashed many different coloured lights; red, yellow, blue and green.

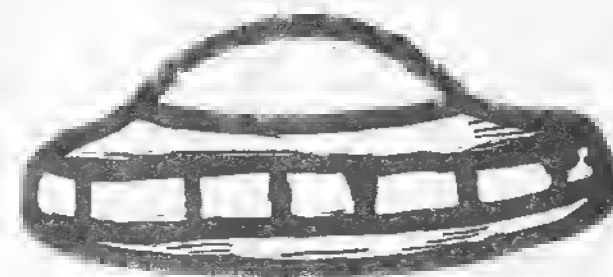
Nigel felt the object was circular (he did a drawing of it) and that there was a row of windows around the middle. He could only see a bit of the object but the windows were going round with the craft, as though the whole thing was spinning.

Nigel has had several sightings of what he feels are 'unexplained lights in the sky.' On one occasion, the family cat tried to get down the steps and out of the room. At this stage, Nigel's sister entered the room and although the cat was familiar with her, when she tried to reassure it, the animal scratched and clawed at her, frantically.

Nigel has had several experiences of sightings such as these.

COMMENT : It is difficult to try and identify anything at such a late date, but I feel that perhaps it was a star or a planet with some autokinesis involved; also, Nigel's family did contact the Observatory and were advised NOT to telephone the Naval Base at 'Silver Mine as 'they didn't like that sort of thing.' -Ed.

* * * * *



Nigel's drawing of the object he saw

Case N° 39: Sean Rhategan, of Cape Town.
Interview by Pamela Puxley.

Sean Rhategan, aged 24, was interviewed regarding his experience in February, 1988. He is not sure of the exact date but there were several witnesses.

Sean says: 'One evening during February, we had a picnic on Camps Bay beach and were sitting on the rocks between Glen Beach and Camps Bay. We had packed up because the giant cockroaches had come out that night. We had been sitting in the dark watching them running over us when we decided to pack up. On our way back this 'thing' came sweeping over Camps Bay Beach.

It's hard to say what size it was because of the tunnel effect and things like that, but I would say it was about as big as a two cent coin. And that's fairly big.

It was travelling along Camps Bay beach and going quite fast. It crossed the sky in about five minutes, from horizon to horizon, then disappeared between Table Mountain and Lion's Head, through the kloof there.

Now, if you visualize a two cent piece, for a thing of that size to go between Table Mountain and Lion's Head, you can just imagine how big it must have been. It was silver and round; sort of hub-cap shape. The object had port-holes, independent lights similar to round port-holes, and these were illuminating the actual silver disc. That's how I was able to see the shape, from the light of the port-holes, otherwise it would have been very difficult to pick out an unilluminated shape at night.

There were about 10 or 12 of these small port-holes, the light coming through them was white and there was no other light. There was no vapour trail or any other detail I could see, as I was focussing on this particular 'thing'. We were four witnesses, including my brother and his wife, and we all saw it quite clearly.

The object was travelling SW to NE. The weather was perfect with excellent visibility -- good enough for a picnic!

There was no sound whatsoever; you would imagine there would be some sound from something as big as that, but there was nothing. It is difficult to say what speed it was doing, it would depend on the distance covered. If it took five minutes to cross our visibility, I would say it was doing something between 1000 and 2000 kms per hour.

Regarding the height: for it to get over Table Mountain, it must have flown at over 1000 metres at least, taking into account that a two cent coin would have been a pretty big object.

It didn't have any noticeable after-effects; I felt fine as did everyone else. I do wear glasses but my vision is very good.

When we got home, everyone said, "You're daft."

But our group all thought it was a UFO, but where does one take it from there? We didn't think much more about it at the time.'

Sean admitted that he had seen 'something' before. He had also read about UFOs and was not unfamiliar with them.

'I saw something red once, going over Cape Town. It was a clear night, at about 20:00 (8 p.m.). The whole thing was illuminated and it looked like those little jet fighters in the Video Games in the Arcade. It was going from the north-west, straight across the sky. The altitude was approximately 2000 metres. The object was outlined in red and travelling across the sky, and I put it down to some sort of Soviet test, but when you think rationally, of course it couldn't have been that --- over Cape Town! It had a triangular nose, coming back to two fins sticking out, then to a sort of Delta wing at the back.

And once, during my childhood, I saw a circle, a triangle and some other shape, all coloured pink, in the sky. They were very small; who knows what it could have been? The time was about 15:00 (3 p.m.) and it was a clear day with no clouds about.'

Sean also pointed out that on the same night as the 1988 sighting, a friend who is a teacher at Pinelands High School said some of his students who were hiking in the mountains, reported seeing a UFO. He said to them, "What utter rubbish! How can you see a UFO?" But, says Sean, it was the same night as his observation, but 20 minutes later. The students also described it as silver, with port-holes, and going across the sky. These people were in the Cedarberg which is about 200-300 kms from Camps Bay beach. But they had seen the object some 20 minutes later, which would mean it was travelling at about 1500 kms per hour.

Sean has for sometime, about 18 years in fact, been interested in satellite tracking and astronomy.

* * * * *

UNCONFIRMED REPORTS

From the EVENING POST, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, 7th May, 1992.

In the early hours of the 7th May, two witnesses made separate reports of a UFO over Port Elizabeth.

Patrick said he was on the balcony of his Central flat at 01:00 when he saw what looked like a disc of bright light fly across the sky. It was travelling at a tremendous speed, far too rapidly for an aeroplane.

Justin, a University student, said he was with a friend at Hobie Beach at 02:00 when he saw a round object, white in colour, fly across the City. He estimated the size at between 500 metres and one kilometre in diameter. He could not hear any sound and the light was constant.

A few minutes later, Justin saw the object again, this time it was tilted and saucer-like in shape. 'It was huge', he said.

The Airport Control Room said there was no record of anything unusual sighted in the City during the night or early this morning.

ABDUCTIONS

'The abduction phenomenon appears to be part of a very real, very long and very structured pattern.'
-- Jenny Randles, noted British UFO investigator.

ALIEN Descriptions: *****

'They were completely silver and I couldn't see any face at all...they were moving in a strange way...it looked more as though they were gliding over the surface.'

-- Hugo Ferreira of Despatch, Groendal Reserve Case, R.S.A.

CONTINUING INVESTIGATIONSCase No. 2 - JS of Cape Town

(Reported in UFO AFRINEWS No. 1, pp 23-29 and No. 2, p 19)

This case occurred sometime during November/early December, 1980. The main witness, Joe - there were two - has continued with his recall and as we meet on an annual basis during visits to South Africa, we have updated his case as he has given fresh evidence. Recently, he pointed out that he was not happy with the drawing of the craft (AFRINEWS 2, p 19) and would like to make several alterations. We have therefore re-done the drawing according to his instructions (rather crudely) and he has now approved it to the best of his knowledge.

This is one of the reasons that we always advocate constant contact with witnesses of major UFO sightings so that corrections and alterations to the original evidence can be made in defence of accuracy. We are extremely grateful to Joe for his constant co-operation and interest.

He says, 'With regard to the drawing of the rocket: I feel quite relaxed right now as it's quite late at night when my mind seems to come on line with maximum efficiency. Usually it's full of cobwebs during the day. Here, once again, is what I recall.'

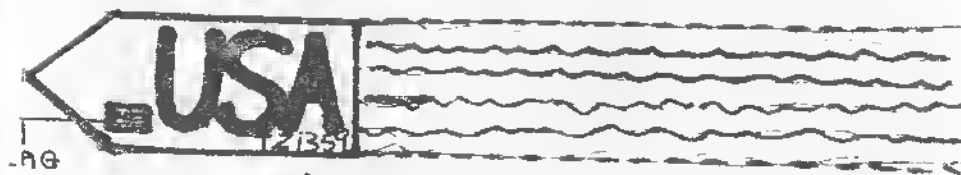
The first thing that comes to mind is the huge size of the object. I always find that when I draw the outline, the proportion of length and width, that the huge letters USA do not leave much space for the numbers and letters which I recall. After the 'A' of USA there is not enough space to write the letters and numbers. As I have commented on your drawing, my mind is getting fuzzy about this. I now suspect that these were written small under the 'A' of USA and perhaps slightly behind it. There just was not much space after the 'A' as the letters USA were so large that they dominated everything and almost reached from the very top to the very bottom of the rocket.

At this moment in time I can't see that an intercontinental ballistic missile need be this big. If it was an intercontinental ballistic missile, its potential to destroy a large part of our planet must be awesome. If people on this Earth knew that their defence incorporated such huge, frightening weapons, they would become terrified. It would be insane to explode a rocket that size. The bomb dropped on Hiroshima was tiny in comparison, I should imagine. No plane on Earth could transport a rocket anywhere near the size of the rocket I saw in Goodwood.'

Joe points out that during a visit to the top of Table Mountain, he photographed the area where the rocket had travelled and he noted three round tower blocks on the mountainside below him. The rocket, he says, must have been close to the diameter of the blocks.

He goes on: 'What I recall about the flag was that it was so neatly drawn. The red, white and blue colours and the clean whiteness of the rocket were so impressive. I am pretty sure that the flag was not too big and at the bottom of the front 'U' of USA. I am also sure that the back of the rocket where the flame came from, was simply a straight line down and no cavity at the back was visible.

The length of the flame is the next issue. I now think the flame was half to even one kilometre long.'



2 letters and 4 numbers were seen but JS can't recall what they were.

The flame behind the object was very long, several times its length

SUNDAY TABLOID STORIES RELATING TO AFRICA

As readers of UFO AFRINEWS are probably aware, there are several tabloids in both the United States and Great Britain which will take the kernel of a story and sensationalise it to the Nth degree.

During the course of a year, we receive many cuttings of this type, kindly sent to us by Lillian Desquin of Harbor Heights, Florida, USA.

We are certainly grateful to her for keeping us 'in touch', but one must admit that the majority of the stories should be taken with a pinch of salt. In mitigation, let us state that on several occasions stories have appeared, sensationalised to the hilt, but which were based on the absolute truth, as we took the trouble to check them out. One was about the three-toed people of the Vadoma tribe in Zimbabwe, and several stories about folklore which we knew to be based on truth. So it is for this reason that we decided to bring you the following story from THE SUN, summarized for you but basically as it was written up in the paper, dated April 2nd, 1991.

According to the article, 'a top wildlife photographer, Brenda van der Hoerten', of South Africa, vanished without a trace while on an elephant photographing safari in Kenya in 1979.

Interviewed by a reporter from the paper, Brenda told how she had been abducted by aliens who whisked her off to Mars, where for 12 terrible years she was treated like a caged monkey by beings who never spoke to her, kept her naked, ignored her cries and screams and pleading, ran scanner-like devices over her body regularly, and brought her the most disgusting, 'foul-tasting slop' to eat, composed of rotting vegetables and plants that looked as if they had been brought up from planet Earth.

Only the strongest survival instincts kept her alive, she said. She forced herself to eat the slop, hoping that some day her captors would tire of her and release her.

After 12 years of poking, prodding and observing her, they eventually did, returning her clothes and equipment and dropping her back in the exact spot where they had picked her up in 1979.

Brenda, who claimed to have lost a lot of weight while captive, said she was sure her captors took her to Mars because she had had a good look at the planet surface while their craft was coming in to land. Photographs of Mars that she had seen convinced her that this was the place she was taken to. She was imprisoned in a cell-like room with a clear bubble dome. Her captors, she told the interviewer, were man-like beings with large football-shaped heads, big round eyes and no ears or mouths that she could see. They made no sound at all.

After she was beamed down in the Kenyan wildlife reserve near Nairobi where she had been on safari, she stumbled around in the bush until she was found by game rangers, bleeding and bruised. They took her to a hospital for treatment.

Brenda eventually made her way to Johannesburg in South Africa where, at the time of her interview with the American paper, she was living in a tiny rented room, with no money and no family. She had been forced to take a menial job so she could pay the rent, while she looked for her husband and two children whom she had lost and of whom she could find no trace.

According to the interview, Brenda was anxious to make contact with her family and pick up the pieces of her shattered life after her incredible ordeal.

Some of the Ufologists who questioned her believed she was telling the truth. Claude Richelieu, a French Ufologist, is quoted as saying that Brenda's facts never varied after much questioning, and that hers was a fascinating story. She told him that just before being seized she had felt a tingling sensation all over her body, then suddenly found herself inside a strange metallic room, surrounded by the man-like beings with football heads and no mouths.

Claude asked her to go to Paris for further investigations, but all Brenda wanted was to find her family and live a normal life.

*

Needless to say, we have tried to trace BRENDA VAN DER HOERTEN. Her name sounds Dutch, so perhaps her husband came from Holland. It is not a common South African name.

We have been in touch with a Ufologist in Johannesburg; we have written to two of the leading newspapers, neither of which has replied. If anyone has any knowledge of Brenda, or her whereabouts, we would appreciate your contacting us. Or, if you can suggest any other method of tracking her down, again, we look forward to hearing from you.
-Ed.

THE WEEKLY WORLD NEWS of July 12, 1988 reported that scientists had found a tribe in the jungle of Zaire who claimed to have come there from Mars in 1812!

Of the original 25 'planetary' travellers, three remained alive in 1988 when they were discovered - they would then have been 176 years old.

They told Swedish scientist Dr Signe Winslof that their spacecraft was still hidden in the bush near their settlement east of Kisangani.

The 'Martians' had become acclimated to Earth and a primitive jungle life, though 'they still possess the knowledge and technology to travel through space and colonise planets.' Dr Winslof said his party had found the tribe while studying Zairean tribal cultures in April of 1988. After initial distrust, the tribesmen showed them the rusted remains of 'a silver crescent-shaped starship' in which they originally fled Mars to escape a virus that was wiping out their race. They had settled in the jungle where their descendants now numbered 50.

The report said they were black and totally human save for their eyes which were 'completely white.'

They were very fond of circular patterns and hoops, using them for designs in their homes, and body paint.

The Swedish party said that though the tribe spoke 'a typical African dialect' among themselves, they used Swedish and English when conversing with the scientists. They would not talk about their ancestors' life on Mars, but still had maps of that planet and the solar system. But they were not prepared to reveal anything about their past.

Dr Winslof said the experts would return to the area later in 1988 and 'publish a full scientific report with photographs.'

* * * * *

Well, we are still waiting for the published report which, obviously, would revolutionise our knowledge of life on Mars!

COMMENT ON MARS

Reported in a new Australian UFO magazine, UFO REPORTER, Vol. 1 N° 1. A\$25 per year for 4 issues, to UFO (NSW), Box Q95, Queen Victoria Building, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia.

Brian Crowley, in his new book RETURN TO MARS, comments that some years ago a Galileo probe was sent around the Earth to test its equipment. It reported that our planet showed no signs of intelligent life and completely missed such structures as the Great Wall of China.

The 50 000 pictures of Mars taken by the Viking probe 15 years ago show it as a barren, cold and windswept planet. Features picked up were Valus Maximus, the Grand Canyon of Mars, which is 400 kms wide; and Olympus Mons, the largest known mountain in the Solar System, some 650 kms around the base. Channels were also shown which indicate that at some time in the past quantities of water flowed on the planet's surface. We also know that at one time Mars had an atmosphere like Earth's.

In 1977, Mariner produced pictures of what is called the 'Inca City' because its box-like shapes reminded scientists of an aerial photo of a ruined Inca city. One pyramid shape on the edge of a crater is geologically impossible. James Hetch pointed out large pyramid shapes on Mars. In Cydonia, an unusual formation known as 'the Face on Mars' appears. Initially NASA attributed the Face feature to condensation on the camera lens. This structure is 2.5 kms long, 2 kms wide and 500-800 metres high. With computer enhancement, it shows eyes in the eye sockets and teeth in the mouth.

In the Utopia region of Mars there may be a second face formation but this is not well preserved.

All photos analysed by Crowley come from NASA, but recent requests have been unsuccessful.

In 1988 two Russian probes were sent to Mars. The first was lost but produced good pictures. Before crashing, Phobos sent seven images to Earth containing some remarkable features. One of these pictures shows an object orbiting Mars that should not be there.

There are many folklore links on Earth with Mars.

AFTERMATH OF AN INTERVIEW

Cynthia Hind

On Tuesday, 31st of March of this year, I was interviewed by John Robbie on RADIO 702, in Johannesburg. As a result of this 2-hour marathon talk-in, we had dozens of callers with UFO stories of their own; some who were frustrated at not being able to report what had happened to them as they had no contact address, and some who were too afraid to tell of their strange experiences. What a sad indictment of our society that people should have to exist in this state of inertia when there are so many experts 'out there' who could help them.

Although it is true that I am the Co-ordinator of the African Continent for MUFON in Seguin, Texas, and that I feel I have more experience and knowledge than most of those involved with UFOs in Africa, there are many fine, honest and trustworthy people coming to the fore in different parts of our continent who are also available to interview and advise. Inside the front cover of all issues of AFRINEWS there is a list of names and phone numbers of contacts in this regard.

Unfortunately, due to the number of callers, the commercial intercepts, John's discussion with me and my imparting of some of the knowledge of which the general public is unaware, there were many calls which could not be taken on that morning. However, some of the callers did report fully and in some instances, have written to me subsequently, and so I share with you the more interesting cases which reached me on
RADIO 702.

>>>>>><<<<<<<<

Case 43: 'FRANCO' - In November 1975, Franco was driving along a tar road somewhere near De Aar in the Cape, when he experienced a vibrating sort of noise and began to feel sleepy. He pulled off to the side of the road and immediately fell into a sleep which was almost like a trance.

He dreamed that he was totally at peace and he saw himself lying on a table. He could not see what was beyond the table as the lights shone brightly all around him. There were a few people around him. He cannot remember what they looked like but they were probing his right-hand side which felt warm. (He had no fear during this dream.)

When he woke up he drove on to De Aar where he booked into his hotel. His side felt itchy and in the mirror he could see six red dots like burn marks and a faint red line snaking through the spots.



Actual size

He then became frightened as he began to recall his dream. The marks took about 4 weeks to disappear and the red line took about 4 months to fade completely.

Subsequent to this, Franco has felt the same type of vibration but nothing else. He has no dreams and no marks on his body.

Franco controls several companies and has post-graduate degrees. Because of this, Franco wishes to remain anonymous but I am in contact with him and hope to enlarge on his report in a later issue.

Of course, one cannot assess the genuineness of a case from the details I have, except that I am almost certain Franco would not be aware of the marks and scars left by the 'aliens' when examining humans. I think this case has great potential particularly as Franco has confided that when he was a little boy of 5 or 6 years of age, he told his parents that he had come from another planet. Budd Hopkins, the well-known authority on abduction cases, says that in most instances, children are taken from the age of 7 upwards, but it is highly possible that Franco is not recalling the age factor accurately. We shall have to wait and see!

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Case 44: 'ANNE' of Johannesburg

"I'll tell you a story: my daughter called me in January, 1992. She told me she was invited by a friend of hers, a scientist, who was working on a special assignment in the Nevada Desert.

He wanted her to go with him to see something that he thought she would find absolutely phenomenal; something very secret and hushed up.

She went along with him and two photographers, a video-cameraman and another scientist. They had a car and they drove to Las Vegas, and then walked for about 1½ hours into the desert.

That night they climbed this mountain. They had special permits to do this and they sat there and waited. At about 11 o'clock that night, my daughter counted 16 bell-shaped craft with dancing lights that were going up and down very, very fast.

In that area there were many United States Airforce helicopters that were going round as well, and one came down to hover where they were, beamed a light at them and said, "What are you doing here? This is a restricted area, you've got to get out of here."

Anyway, they left the mountain and went down and met these officers. They had their permits examined and they were then taken to this Air Force Base where the whole thing was discussed and they were told they had to keep quiet about it. They were informed that the elevator on the Base went down below ground for 11 levels where there were craft from other galaxies.

This scientist with whom she was having a serious relationship, took her. She said she could not give the name of the scientist."

Anne said her daughter and the others were informed that the public would be terrified to hear this sort of material and that was why they were keeping quiet about it, but that now we were moving on to 1992 we were going to see lots more reports in the newspapers and wherever... and through Jim Hurtak we would hear everything about what was going on. Slowly the public were going to become acquainted with that phenomenon.

"Last night on Fax she sent me a report entitled THE EARTH CHANGES REPORT, and one of the headings says: 'Phenomena - Massive Sightings of UFOs, especially in Europe.

Close-up photos reveal many are robotic craft. United States begins to leak information about existence of alien life forms."

Anne promised to let Radio 702 have a copy of this material on FAX.

*

COMMENTS:- I could not understand why Anne mentioned the name of James Hurtak, except that he might have been the accompanying scientist, but of course she would not verify any names. Also, despite her daughter's serious relationship with her scientist 'friend', I cannot believe that she would be included, together with photographers and a video cameraman, in a close-up view of what top scientific Ufologists have been trying to find out for years and years. Not that I accuse her of not telling the truth; it is just that the whole story seems somewhat incongruous to me. First they are warned off by the Air Force, and then taken to this Air Force Base and told secrets of which the rest of the world is totally ignorant.

I feel there is a lot more to this incident than meets the eye. I do not think it is a hoax, concocted by Anne's daughter, but if one reads Jacques Vallee's REVELATIONS, it might very well be a hoax perpetrated by the U.S. Air Force!

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Case 45: 'JOHAN' of Pretoria

' In 1987, we were busy with operations in Southern Angola with the South African Defence Force. It was early in the morning and the sky was just lighting up, when suddenly we saw this vortex of mist; like a typhoon taken on a satellite picture.

There were a lot of vehicles travelling along with 200-300 people. We all saw this thing coming down, like a chopper, and the mist was swirling around the blades. We were still driving but we were all looking around at this thing.

When it was high up in the sky it was quite small but it hovered above us, about a 2-3 km vortex. It hung there for a while and then it shot off at an unbelievable speed, and disappeared with millions of little light flashes.

Afterwards, the authorities explained it to us. They said it was a chopper hovering there and what we saw was anti-aircraft, but that was unbelievable; there was no aircraft that could fly that fast. And those flashes, that's not anti-aircraft. It's not like that at all!

*

COMMENTS:- I think this is a most interesting case as there were so many witnesses, none of whom believed what the authorities had to say. Strangely enough though, they did not query it at a higher level. How easily we are all deceived! I would have liked to have spoken longer with Johan and am hoping I can be put in touch with him again to further research this item.

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Case 46: Trevor and Stella Decker

'My wife and I were returning home to Bloemfontein from our honeymoon in 1958, during the first week of January in the late afternoon.

I saw, from my side of the car, on the eastern side, a grey/silver object moving above the ground. I became excited and slowed down, asking my wife to lean over and look out of my window, when she also saw it.

I pulled over to the side of the road and stopped the car. Although my wife was very nervous, she crossed the road with me to get a closer look at the object.

It wasn't very high off the ground and was no more than 300 metres away. It wasn't big, about the size of a combi [15 seater mini-bus].

We didn't climb through the fencing as my wife was still very afraid and in actual fact, so was I. We stood there and looked at this thing for perhaps half to three-quarters of a minute and then it went up and backwards of its position, very fast, until it was no longer visible. This acceleration took just a moment or two.

There was no sound, not even a 'swish'. The object had no markings and no windows that we could see and it looked like an upside-down dessert plate.

Although the colour was a grey/silver, it is difficult for me to describe, but it had a very distinct light shining through its entire bodywork. I know it is not likely to have been a light, but that is what it looked like.

I will always regret that I didn't report this to the FRIEND newspaper on that very day or at least while I was still impressed by this occurrence.'

>>><<<

COMMENT: This report reminded me immediately of the Fort Beaufort case of 1972 (UFOS-AFRICAN ENCOUNTERS, page 44) although in that instance the object was estimated to have been only about 75 centimetres across, and obviously Trevor's object was a great deal bigger. There has been speculation that some of these objects, if indeed they are from another world or Dimension, are robotically controlled, and I would feel, if that was true, that it could apply in this instance. But who are we to speculate when we don't even know what this is all about; where they are from, and whether it might be some sophisticated government experiment of which the public are not informed.

* * * * *

ALIEN Descriptions:

' I'm 1,7 metres tall and they came up to my chin...they were very slender in build.. The one with the beard...had ordinary black hair. But his skin [was] a sort of olive colour.'

-- Megan Quezet, Mindalore, R.S.A.

Case 47 : 'Rhoda', a beautiful and talented artist, had the following story to tell :-

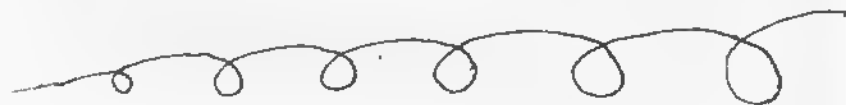
In 1975, towards Christmas (exact date uncertain), it was early evening - possibly between 7 and 8 pm - and I drove to the top of a hill in the south of Johannesburg with a friend. We had something to discuss and were busy talking when I suddenly noticed a very bright light above us.

At first I thought it was a street light, but it was far too bright and too high up for that. Also, there were no street lights in the area. We next considered if it could be a very bright star, but felt it was too close to us for that, as it was hovering above us.

While this bright light was shining, I could see no outline of a craft. It was only when this light dimmed that the object became visible.

There was no loud sound, but - and I cannot swear to this - a barely audible hum or whine could be heard. It might have been a broken sound, but my recollection is that it was constant. Suddenly, the light started to diminish and appeared to recede; it actually felt eerie. We then saw an enormous craft above us although the distance was difficult to judge at night. It started to move away and my companion urged me to follow it along the road. I did this until it gathered speed and shot off at a 30°-45° angle at an unbelievable speed. (As I was on top of a hill, it was difficult to assess the exact angle.)

The object, which appeared to be dark grey metal, was extremely large. It was shaped like a huge flattened cotton-reel, probably a little more oval than round, but that could have been an optical illusion. The movement was in the shape of a



It was turning all the time, not terribly fast at first, then gathered momentum. I felt the object was ponderous, heavy. I also had the distinct impression of 'portholes' - glowing red (like traffic lights) and I think it was the perspective of the portholes that made me think the craft was not completely round. (My companion did not see the curve of the 'portholes' or the thin ray of light that remained at the base of the machine but his eyes were not as good as mine.)

At the end of the craft was a very thin, perpendicular ray of light which remained in the rear even when the craft was moving. This ray of light was a yellowish-white colour. The great white light had completely disappeared when the object finally left at great speed. Once it sped away, it was like a flash of light - too fast to follow. The movement of the craft was like a flat spiral, each rotation taking in a little more space as it gathered speed.

My friend, who is a down-to-earth ex-RAF pilot said, "I suppose we have been looking at a UFO", and suggested that as an artist, I should immediately draw what I had seen. The next day my friend phoned and urged me to contact the Press. I did not do so. Thinking about the event, I must stress that I felt no fear or any kind of threat from the craft, whatever it was! Only a strong interest and intense observation on their part. I cannot explain how I know this, but I do.

I am a sceptical, analytical person with a photographic memory and an open mind. After the sighting, I spent the night in amazement at what I'd seen and the certain knowledge that UFOs exist.'



ABDUCTION CASE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Recently, on a South African commercial television programme, two ladies - a mother and daughter - were interviewed about an abduction experience they had in July, 1988. The reason for the delay in reporting the experience was because they did not know to whom they could turn. Initially they reported the matter to the Johannesburg Planetarium, but although they were given a form by the secretary, there appeared to be no follow up. Subsequently, through another contact, they were put in touch with Elizabeth Klarer.

As a sympathetic listener, Elizabeth could relate to what had happened to them due to her own experiences. Later they attended a meeting of a UFO group and through them, were able to discuss their event with more knowledgeable people.

Their story is a fascinating account of how they were taken from their car into a craft, and the many varying experiences they underwent during this period. Both witnesses are intelligent, observant people, who have questioned what happened to them with great interest and attention to detail, and I think this is one of the finest abduction reports that I have come across -- certainly in Africa!

A full report of their experience is being prepared for leading abduction specialists such as MUFON, Budd Hopkins, psychologist Joe Nyman and other people of that ilk in the United States.

There is no doubt that their story is closely allied to many other famous cases from all over the world, although I am quite sure that they did not have access to the confidential material that investigators such as myself are familiar with.

The story, of course, belongs to the two ladies concerned, but I hope I can persuade them to let me use their material in our next issue. Some of their revelations will surely make your hair stand on end!

EXTRACT FROM 'PROJECT BECASSINE'

Computer Analysis by Denys Breysse of Antony, France

UFO CONTACTEES:

The witness is alone six times out of ten, with a higher frequency of cases from files 'inside' and 'contact'.

It is a man, six times out of ten, with geographical variations which seem to indicate a socio-cultural influence. Reports coming from males are more frequently quoted as 'classical', but they are on average less reliable. The percentage of female witnesses is higher for 'unexplained' cases. More than half of all witnesses are between 10 and 30 years of age, with a mean age of 28 years. Only contactees are older. The mean age increases with the information index. Farmers are the most frequent witnesses, but it is with a lesser frequency that they report being inside a UFO or observing an isolated entity. In one case out of two, the experience begins when the witness is moving (on foot, in a car, etc). The CE4's (abductions) are more frequent when the witness is asleep. The attention of the witness is attracted by noise, or the effects of the phenomenon (paralysis, light forms, etc) three times out of ten.

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Denys Breysse can be contacted at N° 9, Avenue St Exupery, 92160 Antony, France, by those interested in computer print-outs on UFO information.

ALIEN Descriptions:

'They were a bit on the small side... rather thin and pale. Not healthy looking, or robust...they had slanting eyes, long faces with high cheek-bones, coming down to a sharp chin.'

-- Danie van Graan in the Loxton Case, R.S.A. Africa..

LETTERS

From Nathan Middledorf, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

'In reply to your SOS in UFO AFRINEWS 5 regarding the diameter of the Bulawayo Centenary Park Fountain: the diameter of the bottom of the fountain would be roughly 30 feet (10 metres).'

++++++

From W.S. van Heerden, Pretoria, South Africa

'I saw James van Greunen on South African TV and he made a good impression. Following this, I telephoned the given number in Johannesburg and received a very vague and distinctly 'dodgy' reply from the woman who answered the telephone. I felt uneasy and dropped the attempt to make contact.

...Small, ball-like manifestations are not new. See for example Ch. 5, 'Dilemma at Fort Beaufort' in UFOS-AFRICAN ENCOUNTERS, and Mary Kingsley's sighting in 1895 reported in AFRINEWS 5, p. 26. Certain characteristics of this manifestation must be noted, namely, (a) the ball-like form, (b) the compactness/miniaturization, and (c) seeming explosion or implosion. The disintegration, or seeming disintegration is, to my mind, an important aspect. See cases in AFRINEWS 5 towards the bottom of pages 8 and 13.

Would there not be the possibility of traces left for inspection? Is something not perhaps being distributed on Earth? [Intriguing thought! - Ed.]

Perhaps it's not fanciful to refer to the sudden appearance during the last decade, of the exquisitely engineered and deadly accurate HIV which manifests the following highly intelligent characteristics: (a) outwitting, invading and using the defence mechanism of the human body for its spread; (b) using the strongest human drive, namely Sex; (c) allowing up to 20 years... to propagate itself before killing its host, and (d) it is thought to have the highest propensity to mutate, even more than influenza.

As the number of HIV-infected [people] increases - in South Africa alone, at least 10 million estimated by the end of 1994 - mutational chances also increase. There is super-intelligence behind the H.I. Virus. And is all this linked to human destruction on planet Earth... holes in the ozone layer at both poles; destruction of oxygen-producing tropical forests; pollution of rivers and oceans; hundred-kilometre gill nets; unprecedented burning of fossil fuel and wood; smothering accumulation of human rubbish... in short: TOO MANY HUMANS, requiring 'divine' intervention?

It seems to me that the UFOs are but one aspect of something which requires a holistic approach. It is of no use firing a .303 rifle at a ball-like flying object [AFRINEWS 4, p. 18]. It is not of this world. This I realized in the few seconds during which I saw 'my' flying saucer in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique [AFRINEWS 1, p. 21].

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From Eric Herr, of San Diego, California, USA.

The letter says that a group of 35 scientists and engineers has been formed to study UFOs at a scientific level. They have purchased 15 magnetometers to find out if they would be capable of detecting an unidentified flying object at a distance of 5 miles.

Eric Herr continues:

'From world-wide reports it has been ascertained that UFOs often emit extremely powerful magnetic fields. The evidence for this includes the deflection of compass needles up to two miles from the observed object, the magnetization of timepieces, the tripping of burglar and freezer alarms and power outages traced to magnetic disturbance of relays.

The strength of UFO-generated magnetic fields is estimated to range from one million to two million gauss. By comparison, airplanes would generate less than 100 gammas.'

The group hopes to establish monitoring points all over the world, having already placed magnetometers in the USA and Marseilles, France. It is their intention to add other monitoring devices later, such as ultrasonic detectors, microwave radiometers, a 3-channel radio frequency interference monitoring system and automated motion picture cameras. All the stations will emanate from the home of one of the group, or additionally recruited scientists.

Besides Herr, scientists include Dr Gerhard Wolter, Professor of Physics at San Diego State University; Dr Richard Etheridge, Chairman of the Dept of Zoology; Robert Gonsett, consulting electronics engineer and a graduate of MIT, and others.

The letter concludes: 'What we are looking for at this stage are reports of magnetic - as opposed to electromagnetic - effects produced by UFOs, where a magnetic object was actually seen. If this comes from a newspaper or journal, we would require title of origin, date and page number as references. A small payment will be made in US dollars for all confirmed contributions.'

Information should be addressed to :

Eric Herr

Box 15044, San Diego, CA 92175, USA

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From Professor T Auerbach, of Switzerland.

'... When you spoke (at the BUFORA Conference in 1991) about the Elizabeth Klarer episodes, you mentioned that Alpha Centauri was Akon's home planet. 1

He probably meant the Alpha Centauri System, of which Proxima is the smallest member. Of the two main stars of Alpha Centauri, one is about as bright as our sun and one is a third as bright. The third member, Proxima, is only about 1/17000 as bright as the sun and hardly able to provide sufficient heat to maintain life on a planet.

In addition, the two main stars are so far apart that the orbit of Proxima should be quite unstable, so that the orbit of any planet within this triple system would be highly erratic. Sometimes it would come close to one of the stars, then again it would be catapulted far out into space. Its poor inhabitants would be alternately roasted and frozen. I don't think life could ever have developed on any planet belonging to that system. My impression is that Akon, assuming he exists, tells Mrs Klarer some freely invented stories, knowing that she cannot disprove them. This is a strange and puzzling feature of all contactee accounts.

Karl Veit, whom you mention in your article, was a great believer in Mrs Klarer, but since Mr Veit's group as well as his journal, UFO NACHRICHTEN, became more and more sectarian, a certain amount of suspicion necessarily attaches not only to him but also to the persons he has supported.

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[I must make it clear that while I question certain aspects of Elizabeth Klarer's contact, I have never doubted that she had an experience. It has always been inexplicable to me that so many contactee stories are acceptable whereas Elizabeth has come in for more than her fair share of denigration and abuse. The only explanation I find plausible for this is that Elizabeth herself is far too gullible, and that many of her latter contacts are of a spiritual nature. Besides which, dramatisation of events never helped any witness. We are also aware that whoever the 'aliens' are, they are no respecters of truth, and Elizabeth's own dramatisation of events does not enhance her story. - Ed.]

1. This was an error on my part; it should, of course, have been Proxima Centauri as reported in my paper in the Conference Proceedings - Cynthia Hind.

From Joseph Dörner of Fylde UFO Investigation Group, Blackpool, England.

(Referring to Case No. 7, 'The Engineer and the Alien' reported in previous issues)

'...Sadly, the conclusion I reached was that the propulsion system proposed would not work. However, Arthur Tomlinson (DIGAP) with whom I discussed the case, drew my attention to the following lines from the ancient Hindu scripture, the Samarangana Sutradhara:-

Strong and durable must the body of the Vimana be made...inside one must put the mercury engine with its iron heating apparatus underneath. By means of the power latent in the mercury which sets the whirlwind in motion, a man sitting inside may travel a great distance in the sky. [Underlining mine. - Ed.]

Both Arthur and I favour an electromagnetic system as a possible means of propulsion in this case, rather than a mechanical one.

However, it might just prove fruitful to look at the problem, not in terms of conventional physics, but in the light of some of the new theories currently being put forward, eg. the proposed unification of the gravitational with the electromagnetic force. If gravity were to behave, in certain conditions, like the electromagnetic force, then it is easy to see how such a propulsion system might work. Indeed, there are some interesting references in the report to an effect 'similar to electricity...not exactly a magnetic field but the force of gravity' and to 'magnets...unobtainable on earth.'²

So perhaps it is to the physics of the future that we should be looking for an understanding of how this propulsion system might work.

² According to Henry, the 'alien' actually said that they had found some magnetic material which we did not have and which they used in their System.

CROP CIRCLES :

We have been asked by a well-known Television Production Company for evidence of crop circles in southern Africa. These are generally circles depressed into fields of wheat, maize, rape, etc. (a wide variety of growth) which was brought to public attention in some of the southern counties of England during the 1980's.

Subsequently, not only circles but rectangles, glyphs and other shapes (eg. Mandelbrot Set) have been formed, completely mystifying both scientists and New Agers.

Dr Terence Meaden hypothesized that the circles were caused by a vortex of air in low lying areas; there were many man-made hoaxes too, but some of the depressions are totally inexplicable.

Anyone who has knowledge of such an event in southern Africa is asked to let us have location, date, time (if possible), size and a photograph.

This will be passed on to the Television Production Company who will then deal directly with the informant.

We are not sure of remuneration or not!

The Mandelbrot Set

The distinctive outline of the Mandelbrot Set has become synonymous with the recent adoption of 'Chaos' or Fractal Mathematics by science and technology [it] is an icon unique to the latter part of this century; there does not appear to be anything comparable among the many symbols generated by previous civilisations.

- Quoted from UFO REPORTER, Vol. No 1, March 1992

BOOK REVIEW AND COMMENTARY

Prier Wintle

OUT THERE : The Government's Secret Quest forExtraterrestrials by Howard Blum, Simon & Schuster, 1990. US\$19.95

The first thing one can say about this book is that it is extremely competently written and readable. Occasionally I did feel irritated by the transparently novelistic technique of ending each short chapter with a cliff-hanger, compelling one to turn the page and get hooked into the next chapter, but that is a minor cavill. In general it was a highly pleasurable experience to be carried along instead of having to plod and draw on my own stock of devotion to the subject in order to persist. Quite a number of U.F.O. books, including some important ones, require almost as much persistence as an actual case investigation. Not this one. If you enjoy vivid personalized descriptions of people and situations and of how some individuals, like fundamentalist Christians, disapprove of U.F.O.s, then this is certainly a U.F.O. book you will like.

To a confirmed Ufologist the subject matter itself may not be quite such plain sailing. It certainly had me wondering, right from the start. After all, we all know, don't we, that official U.S. government interest in U.F.O.s began right back in 1947, when Project Sign was set up? Project Sign gave way to Project Grudge and that was succeeded by Project Blue Book. Project Blue Book was officially closed down in 1969, after the publication of the Condon Report, but covert official interest continued to be as intense as ever, as documentary evidence released under the Freedom of Information Act has abundantly proved.

J.A.N.A.P. regulations which severely punish U.S.A.F. personnel who speak about U.F.I. sightings to members of the general public also continue in force.

Yet here is a book which would have us believe that genuine high level concern with the subject only began after a sighting made by the Space Surveillance Centre in Cheyenne Mountain in December 1986 which led to a Flash Alert for CinC - NORAD.

In February 1987 seventeen Air Force officers and intelligence agency scientists, headed by a satellite operation expert named Colonel Phillips, was set up as a top secret U.F.O. Working Group.

The D.I.A., N.S.A. and C.I.A. all deny its existence, as they would have to do of course if we are to believe in its secret existence. But Howard Blum burrows his way in. He can tell us everything that went on at every one of its meetings. Backwards and forwards across the U.S. he flies, personally following up every trail it has blazed -- to Cheyenne Mountain; to the Mojave Desert (in a special N.A.S.A. jet); to the exobiology lab at Moffett Field Naval Base; to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena and its Digital Projects Lab with its Multi-channel Spectrum Analyzer; to Elmwood

in Wisconsin, where sightings occur on a daily basis. And of course no one can check him, or suspect him, or even say anything to him (except refuse to say anything to him, occasionally), because as a reporter he has the rights of a private citizen.

What do you think of that?

Apart from one radar sighting from Cheyenne Mountain and a brief reference to a policeman at Elmwood who was zapped by a ray from a U.F.O., no cases are discussed. This is a book about the people who know, or want to know, or think they know, or don't want other people to know. It is about Information, Freedom of Information, and Disinformation. As such it is quite informative --- if you read between the lines.

Take the MJ12 for instance. It doesn't make its appearance till Part V, Two Hundred and Eleven pages into the book, but when it does all that follows is a must for every serious Ufologist. The actual account of how the document first tumbled through Jaime Shandera's letter box as a roll of exposed but undeveloped Tri-ex 35 millimeter film, one December afternoon in 1984, and how it has led to an unrelenting struggle between Phil Klass, sceptic, on one hand, trying to prove it conclusively bogus, and Bill Moore, Shandera and Stanton Friedman on the other, trying to prove it conclusively genuine, is as good as anything I have seen anywhere else -- possibly better. But the staggering thing we are asked to believe is that no one in the U.S. government had ever heard of it, not even in the most secret intelligence services, till Phil Klass wrote to the F.B.I. enclosing a copy and asking if it was genuine and, if so, stolen. Till then the F.B.I. had always demurely looked the other way, fearing to see something improper, whenever U.F.O.s were mentioned, but now it unquestionably had to investigate a possible theft of classified documents. After more than a year of showing the papers to officials representing each of the nation's intelligence organizations it could not find an agency or an individual willing to swear out a complaint asserting they had been stolen from their classified files. All it could say, therefore, was that if they hadn't been stolen they must be forgeries.

But by whom? They were superlatively well done, even down to three deliberate typing errors designed to trace culprits if they were leaked. Was it the Russians? or the Chinese? or the Bulgarians? or the Air Force Office of Special Investigations?

Maybe the last was the best guess.

In September 1980 Bill Moore met a man he would only be able to identify as the Falcon, after a radio call-in talk he had done on U.F.O.s.

This man offered to help him with his research if he would 'cooperate'. He agreed to do so and was assigned to infiltrate Project Beta.

Project Beta was a combined film and E.L.F. radio monitoring of U.F.O. maneuvers over the Coyote Canyon test area of the Nuclear Weapon Storage Facility near Albuquerque. Paul Bennewitz, a friend of Moore, had designed the ultra-sensitive receivers after he became convinced that a woman patient of psycho-therapist/hypnotist Dr Leo Sprinkle, who had been abducted by aliens, had had mind control devices implanted in her brain. They could see what she saw and hear what she heard. He believed he was picking up the signals by which they controlled her. Moore's job was to feed him "official" documents detailing a secret treaty between the U.S. government and aliens, the existence of underground bases, exchange of technology, brain implants and so on. He eventually succumbed to paranoia and had to be hospitalized.

Moore considers that MJ12, a genuine document proving the existence of U.F.O.s and top level government interest in them, was his reward for his help. A later cryptic postcard enabled him to discover a memo from Robert Cutler, special assistant to President Eisenhower, to General Nathan Twining, confirming the document.

But did it confirm it? Moore's action, betraying his friend, discredited him in the eyes of almost all other Ufologists. Who could really trust him after that? And might he not simply have been "fed" a document himself, similar to those that had been fed to Paul Bennewitz?

Yet on the other hand why was it so important to A.F.O.S.I. to infiltrate and discredit Project Beta? Was he really recording E.L.F. transmissions from the aliens? Or was he inadvertently snooping on secret defence maneuvers?

Whatever the answers to those questions may be, it seems at least highly possible that A.F.O.S.I. has managed to discredit three of the most capable ufological investigators and set the whole ufological community off on a false trail.

But why would it want to do that? Was it a training exercise for agents in spreading disinformation? Or is there really some very cogent reason why the authorities - the secret authorities - don't want any of us to know the ultimate truth? When the U.F.O. Working Group was discussing the F.B.I. report on the validity of MJ12, one D.I.A. scientist made a strange suggestion. Possibly the U.F.O. Working Group itself was a cover-up. Perhaps it was a modern-day Blue Book.

The very fact that it exists, meeting in the Pentagon, helps to protect the true secret, that somebody already knows. After all, if they don't know, who would?

Isn't that just typical of the whole U.F.O. scenario? How nice of Mr Blum to put us in the picture.

GOVERNMENT AGENT:

I hear that some people think I am a government agent! Of which government, they have neglected to say, but one assumes they mean the South African government. (I am a Zimbabwean.) I am extremely flattered that anyone thinks I am important enough to be a spy - at my age too! - but surely spies get paid? So where are the thousands of Rands I should have received? They also seem to feel that investigators who work with me are government collaborators. As a government agent I would scarcely reveal that South Africa, together with other named countries, had penetrated foreign space illegally! So come off it, guys.

CONCLUSION

As I mentioned earlier, one of the real perks of UFO Newsletter editing, is the free exchange of other newsletters from all over the world. Not only is this interesting from the point of view of KNOWING what is going on in other areas, but also to hear the opinions of the editors and other contributors.

Recently, I received the latest edition of UFO ENCOUNTER from Queensland, Australia. The present chairperson is Sheryl Demichelis and her editorial struck a sympathetic chord within me: in effect, what she said was, 'have COURAGE.' Have the courage of your convictions, have the courage to do what you really want to do, and have the courage to say what you think and what you feel is the truth.

When you have been in the UFO business for long enough, as I have, there are moments of disillusionment, when an excellent case turns out to be a hoax; when you are endlessly ridiculed, despite having given a first class run-down of what UFOs are all about, or when your best friends listen to what you say, and then come up with a facetious remark which denigrates the whole frustratingly difficult investigation you have just completed. That is the time of the utmost loneliness, for how many of us - the dedicated researcher, the determined investigator, the vigilant detective - are there really around?

I used to feel sorry for myself and sometimes - just very occasionally - I wanted to give up on the whole intimidating mess. But I didn't, and I was never quite sure why not. And then along comes someone like Sheryl Demichelis and puts the words into my mouth, and I know it was because I had the COURAGE of my convictions and was determined, in the long run, to carry on.

This is not a lecture; far be it from me to tell others how to conduct their lives, but Sheryl says, 'without courage one can easily drown in the sea of negativity that is forever lapping softly at our feet.'

She goes on to say: 'We do this only through our COURAGE to stand by our convictions...it takes great courage to go against the tide of acceptable ideas and beliefs', and perhaps the truest words of all, 'all seekers of truth need help in this deceptive world, and they're not going to get it from the powers that be because they are the ones creating the deception. We must take responsibility for our actions and thoughts and our right to pursue the TRUTH.'

Recently, while appearing on the programme RADIO 702 in South Africa, I was interviewed by John Robbie, an interested and perceptive interviewer and certainly an intelligent and questioning one. We got along fine while I reported the usual UFO incidents and my thorough investigation of them, but the moment I spoke of the 'strangeness' factor, or the Oz Factor, as Jenny Randles of Great Britain calls it, John was taken aback. 'Now', he said, 'I believed you when you told me the usual things, but someone handing out wheat cakes to people standing below - how can I be expected to believe that?' Well, John, that's the way it happened, or is alleged to have happened, and all I did was tell the truth as far as we investigators know it. I knew I was taking a chance that my credibility would be questioned with that vast audience out there in South Africa, but I took my courage in my hands, and said what was really going on. And that's when Robbie no longer had the confidence in me which he had had at the start. And yet all I did was speak the TRUTH.

So let me finish with Sheryl Demichelis' words: 'We must stand up for our beliefs, speak out to help others who are lost, and extend a hand of friendship. Let's take our COURAGE out for a walk regularly; it just might like some fresh air and sunshine for a change!'

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